

## FORMAL REPORT OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR TO SENATE (20 NOVEMBER 2019)

### 1. League Tables

The University has entered the top ten in the [Tables of Tables](#), compiled by the THE.

### 2. General Election

We are now in an election period (often called 'purdah') and the Cabinet Office has released guidance aimed at upholding the impartiality of the Civil Service. The election period ends when a new government is formed. As a university, we are not bound by these rules for civil servants and non-departmental public bodies. However, as a charity, electoral law and Charity Commission regulations do affect what we are able to say and do as an organisation. This does not, of course, affect what staff are able to say and do in a private capacity. During elections, universities are still able to publish and promote academic research and analysis on topical issues relevant to the election and host seminars and discussions on those issues. Academic freedom of speech remains vital and individual academics make an important contribution to public debates around science and policy. The University's communications protocol can help with any questions.

### 3. Brexit

The European Union (EU) has agreed an extension to the deadline for the UK to leave the EU until 31 January 2020. While this avoids the impact of a 'no deal' Brexit in the immediate term, it prolongs the current period of uncertainty which affects many staff and students in our University community. We will continue to monitor developments and respond accordingly. I would like to thank members of the University for the hard work that has been put into preparing for Brexit in recent months.

### 4. University Engagement

The 'Our University, Our Future' initiative is progressing well. The six engagement events for staff and students provided some excellent feedback and the [visual minutes](#) are now available. Further opportunities for engagement will be announced shortly.

### 5. UCU Strike Action

Following a ballot of the membership, UCU is planning to take strike action at this, and 59 other universities, on 25-29 November and 2-4 December 2019. The reasons for the strike action relate to changes in the USS pension scheme, and the 2019 claim covering pay and a range of associated issues. Our priority over this period of action will be to ensure that our students get the quality education and experience for which this University is well known. However, we recognise the right of individuals to express their views through industrial action. I would expect us to acknowledge that people may have different views through this period and treat each other with respect. We will ensure that decisions we take about how we respond to the strike action reflects that respect. For example, salary deductions for those who elect to

take strike action will be re-invested, once any costs are taken into account, in areas which will generate real benefit for both students and staff.

## **6. Access and Participation Plan**

The Office for Students has provisionally approved the Access and Participation Plan submitted by the University. Approval is on the basis that, as is the case for many other Higher Education Institutions, the University has additional monitoring of the actions that the plan will involve.

## **7. REF Code of Practice**

The University has been advised that its revised REF2021 Code of Practice has been accepted by Research England.

## **8. International Engagements**

Since the last meeting:

- 8.1 Following a visit to Monash University by Professor Jeremy Bradshaw, the joint PhD programme with Monash University in Australia is being expanded to include Biology and Biochemistry.
- 8.2 Professor Jeremy Bradshaw and colleagues from the Development & Alumni Relations (DDAR), the School of Management and Department of Electronic & Electrical Engineering visited Singapore in September. As well as hosting a successful alumni reception and lunch, there was also a roundtable to introduce the UK-Singapore Universities Alliance and a series of meetings, workshops and networking events. The UK-Singapore Universities Alliance will be holding an official launch event in London in December.
- 8.3 Following a meeting with representatives from the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*Star) in Singapore, the University was pleased to host an inbound visit on 7 October during which the delegation met with colleagues from Electronic and Electrical Engineering, Pharmacy and Pharmacology, IMI and Chemical Engineering.
- 8.4 At the AGM of the Magalhães Network in Nantes, the Bath bid to host the 2021 AGM won the vote. The Network was formed in 2005 in order to increase the academic exchange and collaboration between Europe and Latin American and the Caribbean. There are around 40 European and Latin American member universities.
- 8.5 In a recent visit to China, Professor Bradshaw visited the Qingdao Campus of Shandong University, the Qingdao International Academicians' Park, the International Campus of Zhejiang University and Nanjing University to explore possible collaboration in education and research.
- 8.6 Professor Bradshaw and I, along with colleagues from DDAR, visited Dubai and Hong Kong in early November to meet with alumni, donors and senior business leaders.

## 9. Other University News

I particularly wish to draw the attention of Senate to the following appointments and developments since our previous meeting:

- 9.1 [Dr Dick James](#) has been appointed as Head of the Department of Physics from 1 November 2019.
- 9.2 I visited the Department of Chemical Engineering on 8 November and will be carrying out further visits to the School of Management and the Department for Health at the end of the month.
- 9.3 On 17 October we signed a new three-year partnership agreement with Santander Universities. This year marks a milestone in the partnership as Santander's total support for Bath has now surpassed £2 million and sees nearly 300 staff and students benefiting from Santander's support each year, enabling members of the entire community to go further in their studies, research, and extra-curricular activities.
- 9.4 The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council has awarded £18.5 million to the South West Biosciences Doctoral Training Partnership (SWBio DTP) led by the University of Bristol together with the universities of Bath, Cardiff and Exeter (the GW4 Alliance). GW4 is celebrating five years of championing innovative research, developing talent and securing economic growth across the region.
- 9.5 [The SETsquared Partnership](#) has been ranked the global number one university business incubator for the third consecutive time by leading research and advisory firm, UBI Global.
- 9.6 Professor Saiful Islam, from the Department of Chemistry, has received the 2020 American Chemical Society Henry H Storch Award in Energy Chemistry for his substantial contributions to the fundamental atomistic understanding of new materials for energy storage and conversion devices.
- 9.7 Recent significant grant awards include:

Description	Funder	Principal Investigator	Department	Amount £
Exploring emotional loneliness in older people living in retirement communities: A cross cultural study	Guild Living Limited	Dr Sam Carr	Education	£392,853
UKRI FLF PB Transformation of Transatlantic Counter-Terrorism	UK Research & Innovation	Dr Patrick Bury	Politics Languages & International Studies	£580,890
The Rehabilitation Prison	ESRC	Dr Kate Gooch	Social and Policy Sciences	£400,147
Proteus II	EPSRC	Prof Tim Birks	Physics	£291,402

Professor Ian White FREng  
Vice-Chancellor and President  
November 2019